Strategic Communication in Counter Terrorism:

Target Audience Analysis, Measures of Effect, and Counter Narrative

Baseline Report

NATO COE DAT, Ankara Turkey, 04-05 June 2014 (Wed-Thu)
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**Strategic Communication in Counter Terrorism:**

- Target Audience Analysis
- Measures of Effect
- Counter Narrative

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Glossary of abbreviations

AETC  Air Education and Training Command (USA)
AIT   Advanced Individual Training (USA)
AMISOM African Union Mission in Somalia
CN   Counter Narrative
COE DAT Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism
COIN Counter Insurgency
CT Counter Terrorism
CVE Countering Violent Extremism
DoD Department of Defence (USA)
FCO Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK)
FGS Federal Government of Somalia
IO Information Operations
JD Juris Doctor
JI Jemaah Islamiya
JISTF Joint Information Support Task Force (USA)
MC Military Concept
MENA Middle East North Africa
MOE Measures of Effectiveness
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCTC National Counterterrorism Center (USA)
Psy.D Doctor of Psychology
PSYOP Psychological Operations
qEEG Quantitative Electroencephalography
RAND Research ANd Development (Corporation)
SC Strategic Communication
SO Special Operations (USA)
SOCOM Special Operations Command (USA)
SSDCO Stability, Security and Development in Complex Operations (USA)
StratCom Strategic Communication
TA(A) Target Audience (Analysis)
USG USA Government
USMC United States Marine Corps
USSOCCENT United States Special Operations Command Central (USA)
Preface

This baseline report represents a summary of the Strategic Communication in Counter Terrorism workshop-seminar held at COE DAT in Ankara, Turkey, 04-05 June 2014. The experience of the activity, by the expertise of the speakers and participants and the conceptual dynamics of the presentations and repartee, cannot easily be replicated. This report attempts to transmit an essential overview of the subjects discussed, and points raised. Executive summaries of each speaker’s presentation are contained herein, and have been written by the speakers themselves. They are arranged as they were presented, the order as per annex A (Programme). A second stand-alone paper, produced by 4 of the speakers (volunteers), focuses in more depth on some of the presentations, case-studies, and points of this report.

This workshop-seminar focused on Target Audience Analysis, Measures of Effectiveness and Counter Narrative aspects of Strategic Communication in Counter Terrorism. Speakers were selected from a broad range of expertise and experience, and had latitude to address these focus elements within their specific domain. The activity was therefore methodologically sub-divided into domain areas (effectively panels) of expertise through which the three focus elements could run. These panels were: Information Environment, Measuring Effectiveness, Strategy and Implementation and Narrative.

The final event of the workshop was a session of ‘repartee’. This afforded each speaker an additional window of opportunity for comment/summary, for a maximum of 5 minutes, on any relevant salient point/issue of their choosing. A summary of key terms of that session provides its flavour: risk, complexity (non-linearity), uncertainty, understanding (of self, of cultural context), congruency (’say-do’ gap), coherence (of strategy), and agility (decision-making cycle). Should readers of this report wish to pursue any of the workshop’s research vectors further, they are kindly requested to be in touch with the speakers – their preferred email addresses have been supplied. As the workshop director for this activity, I would also be glad to field any queries too, if not answering them, indicating in the appropriate direction. It was my pleasure to manage this activity, and humbling to coordinate the working group of expert speakers assembled.

Workshop Director
Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism
coursedir@coedat.nato.int
Overview

Dr. Neville Bolt and Dr. Cristina Archetti presented in the ‘Information Environment’ panel. Dr. Neville’s presentation on Insurgency and Strategic Communication effectively set the scene and provided the context for the workshop. Dr. Neville also warned against the conflation of threats into a single global entity, promoting disaggregation by embracing complexity instead. Dr. Cristina illuminated relevant aspects of the digital age, and explained how current understanding based on outdated models and frameworks of communication are inherent limitations in some approaches, and offered a new communication framework. Dr. Cristina also emphasised the importance of credibility, and its relationship with strategy and practice.

Major Greg Seese (Psy.D) and Dr. Christopher Paul presented in the ‘Measuring Effectiveness’ panel. Major Seese’s presentation on behaviour-focused counter terrorism sought to illustrate by explanation and practical example a methodology for measuring effectiveness. Dr. Chris (who presented by VTC from RAND Corporation’s Pittsburgh office) described the RAND study, commissioned by the DoD, on measuring effectiveness within a strategic communication context. Specifically, Dr. Chris introduced the ‘funnel’ model – essentially segmentation of potential target audiences – and associated assessment challenges.

In the ‘Strategy and Implementation’ panel there were 4 presenters and 3 presentations: Dr. Agatha Glowacki and Ms. Sarah Hengemuhle, Mr. Stephen Harley, and Mr. James Farwell (J.D). Dr. Agatha Glowacki and Ms. Sarah Hengemuhle presented a comprehensive model of counter terrorism communications. Dr. Agatha and Ms. Hengemuhle’s presentation covered the use of direct and indirect messaging, and their different effects and implications for mobilised, radicalised and uncommitted audiences. Government CT strategy formulation and communication, especially in the contemporary media context, were presented as real challenges. Mr. Stephen Harley presented a case study of counter terrorism communication in Somalia, emphasising the challenge of ‘operationalising intent’. Mr. Harley set Somalia’s operational context, and associated difficulties of measuring effectiveness, and made a strong case for both the application of creativity and the cooperation of academia and practitioners in this field. Mr. James Farwell’s (JD) presentation majored on a number of themes, two of which in particular: values (judgements people make about what is important to them) and credible rationale (truth; what is to be accomplished; meaningful idea/cause). Mr. Farwell emphasised substance over technology, and disparaged of templated communication strategies.

The ‘Narrative’ panel comprised or Mr. Thomas Elkjer Nissen and Ms. Susan Sim’s presentations. Mr. Nissen linked social media and the weaponisation of it, and institutional narratives and their terrorist
counters, to the challenges of both narrative coherence, and the measurement of its effects. Ms. Sim presented a case study on countering violent extremism in Southeast Asia. The focus was on terrorist rehabilitation programmes that leveraged credible counter-narratives and counter-radicalisation programmes focused on vulnerable communities and individuals. Ms. Sim highlighted both successes and challenges of this approach.
Dr. Neville Bolt
Lecturer
Department of War Studies, King's College London
neville.bolt@kcl.ac.uk

Dr. Neville won a Fletcher Scholarship to Oxford University to read Modern Languages and Literature (German and French). Subsequently, he worked at ITV and Granada Television in the documentary and news-current affairs teams, and at the BBC in Current Affairs. He has also been a producer-director at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in Toronto. Specialising in the production of war zone documentaries, and through his work with state security agencies, death squads, and insurgent groups, he has developed an insight into the motivations, methodologies and dynamics of diverse protagonists in complex struggles. Moving from journalism to political communications, he later created campaigns with the British Labour Party, Amnesty International, and the African National Congress (ANC).

Dr. Neville has a Master’s degree in ‘Conflict, Security and Development’ from the Department of War Studies, King’s College London, where he won the O’Dwyer-Russell Prize for the highest graded distinction. In 2010 he was awarded a PhD in War Studies from King’s. His research explored a new conceptualisation of the terrorist act - the Propaganda of the Deed - and insurgent strategic communications. He currently lectures at King’s on the Masters course ‘Evolution of Insurgency’; researches ‘Strategy and Network Society’ funded by US Office of Naval Research; supervises several PhD students on topics around discourse and communications in conflict; and runs the War Studies PhD seminar group. He has also produced three international academic conferences: ‘Propaganda of the Deed’ (2007); ‘How Insurgents Shape the Media’ (2008); ‘Strategic Communications: The Cutting Edge’ (2011). His book ‘The Violent Image: Insurgent Propaganda and the New Revolutionaries’ was published in May 2012 by Columbia University Press and received the CHOICE ‘outstanding academic status award’ 2013 in North America.
The withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan marks the close of a chapter that has conditioned the way we have come to view expressions of political violence in recent times. A testing, new chapter is opening in the evolution of insurgency, witnessed by the turbulence of events in the Middle East and North Africa, and developments on NATO’s eastern borders. This new phase is characterized by fast-moving networks, digital technologies, and identity-ideology communities.

A picture of fragmented movements is emerging as insurgent and terrorist groups draw on traditional patterns of social relations in countries beyond the West while also mirroring shifts in Western societies from stricter hierarchical organization to more networked structures. This trend is closely tied to the new operational communications environment: technologies of digital media have introduced self-generating and ad hoc connections between networks of formerly disconnected populations. At the same time these links cut across clan, tribal, and ethnic structures within local communities and their extended families and friends in far-flung Diasporas. State efforts to project consistent and coherent messaging are impacted by accelerating flows of information and counter-messaging. Virtual social networks – the domain of mobile phones and laptops – intersect with physical social networks on the ground. Here consumers circulate their own ideas and images in feedback loops that move faster than ‘responsible’ and ‘professional’ media outlets and bureaucratic state communicators can react. Meanwhile, the West’s grand narratives - the enduring counterweight to oppositional, short-term messages – encounter renewed challenges from volatile populations. This trend is especially poignant in a period where fresh reports of social unrest seem to spring up in diverse places and conflict theatres by the day. Consequently, in an era where information management rather than control has become the dominant model for state communicators, managing expectations is as important for NATO...
narratives as not over-promising ideals – such as instant democracy - that nascent political processes will only struggle to realize.

However, understanding grass roots social networks suggests something more. It helps us disaggregate social movements. Because they look the same doesn’t mean they are the same. Yet in the haste of news reporting, these all too often become conflated into a single global threat. What we see across MENA today is a dynamic and heady mix of divergent ideologies, modi operandi, and strategic objectives as the Arab Spring has given way to the Jihadi Spring. Disaggregating networks and movements represents perhaps the most productive way to formulate considered state responses and policies to fast-moving events and the fluid narratives that accompany them.
Dr. Cristina Archetti
Associate Professor in Politics and Media
University of Salford
c.archetti@salford.ac.uk

Dr. Cristina Archetti is Associate Professor in Politics and Media at the University of Salford, UK. She is author of *Understanding Terrorism in the Age of Global Media: A Communication Approach* (2012, Palgrave). Her research interests cover the intersection between security, politics, and strategic communication. Apart from having written extensively on the role of strategic communication in terrorism and counterterrorism, her publications also cover public diplomacy 2.0, the media coverage of war and conflict, the impact of new media on diplomatic practice, and the effect of digital technologies on international journalism. She serves on the editorial board of the journal *Critical Studies on Terrorism* and has over a decade experience in teaching strategic communication at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. Among the rest, she has been teaching the Master’s level course *Terrorism and the Media* since 2008.

Cristina has won several prizes for her work, including the 2010 Top Faculty Paper in Political Communication from the International Communication Association (ICA) in Singapore and the 2008 Denis McQuail Best Article of the Year for Advancing Communication Theory. She has also submitted written evidence to support the House of Lords Select Committee on “Soft Power and the UK’s Influence” in September 2013. Dr. Archetti has a BA in Politics, an MA in International Communication, and a PhD.
While “strategic communication” and “narratives” are advocated by many as essential weapons in countering extremism, very few seem to truly understand the reality of the digital-age information environment where such tools need to be deployed. This piece briefly draws a map to overcome current gaps on the way to more effective counterterrorism: first it examines the limitations of current approaches; second it presents an explanation of narratives as socially constructed; finally it outlines some practical “lessons.”

To start with, strategic communication approaches to countering terrorism tend to be based on a woefully outdated understanding of the information environment. The present focus on “messaging,” in fact, reflects a century-old model of public-media interactions. Such a model—called the “hypodermic needle model”—assumes that the public is passive and that different members of an audience tend to change attitudes and behaviour in a similar way upon reception of the same media message. The reality of communication, though, could not be more different: audiences are active both in the selection of the information they pay attention to (they do not consume all the information that is “out there”) and in the interpretation of media texts. In addition to this there is an emphasis on the alleged “dangers” of the Internet and social media. Again, this view is misled. What we might see as an unprecedented communication revolution is barely the latest manifestation of those profound changes that the introduction of any communication technology, from the printing press to the telegraph, has always generated across history. The not unjustified, but certainly disproportionate, focus on the Internet prevents us from seeing the wider social (and never online-only) space in which extremism is rooted.

Narratives, in a relational and media-saturated information environment, are not only “messages,” but are socially constructed both through face-to-face exchanges and interactions mediated by technology. In this perspective, a narrative is an individual’s understanding of the world and one’s role in it. A narrative is the outcome of a network of relationships an individual is enmeshed in at any given time. Whether an individual will join an extremist group depends on the compatibility between the individual’s own narrative and the group’s one.
Once violent extremism is understood through such relational framework it is easy to counter some widely-held beliefs in counterterrorism circles. Among them are: the notion that terrorism can be “predicted,” that there are technologies (such as the Internet) that might be responsible for radicalization, and that there is a need to counter extremist messages. These notions are wrong because radicalization is a temporal- and context-specific outcome: it depends on an individual’s unique position within a configuration of relationships (which can also be imagined, as in the case of the feeling of admiration for a terrorist leader one has never met) at any given time. The role of the internet should not be dismissed. Of course the Internet has changed our society, political processes, and dynamics of social mobilization. This technology offers the opportunity to reach out to potential supporters internationally and to fundraise more effectively, as social movements (Occupy, for instance), activists (like Anonymous), and charities (as Oxfam) know very well. However, the role of the internet in extremism, as in any political mobilization, is relative: in the mountains of Afghanistan, where there is no electricity and most of the population is illiterate, the terrorists’ narrative is not conveyed through the Internet but rather shabnamah (night letters), leaflets affixed to walls. Counterintuitively, it is not necessary to be exposed to radical ideas to become a radical. The case of Ed Husain, a former British Islamist who became interested in political Islam by reading a religion textbook in school, is an example of the creativity of audiences in actively interpreting messages. Hussein drew his own extremist conclusions from non-radical material that countless other individuals, who did not turn into radicals, had been exposed to.

The implications for counterterrorism are that “we” cannot re-write “their” narrative. Instead, “we” might want to learn from social movements’ and charities’ public communications campaigns—a recent example is the viral fundraising video by British teenager Stephen Sutton, who fundraised over 4 million pounds for Teenage Cancer Trust. Charities, to continue with this example, are learning to operate in an increasingly unpredictable environment. While they cannot know what is going to be “liked” by the public and “go viral” in an increasingly message-saturated society, they understand that audiences do not “buy” artificially packaged top-down messages. Organizations have therefore adapted and transformed from broadcasters of messages to loose frameworks that facilitate the distribution of...
creative content by grassroots activists. Ultimately, although communication is crucial, it is important to understand that the message is not all. “We” can communicate as effectively as we like, but the consistency between words and deeds is paramount. Just to illustrate this with a couple of examples, could the very existence of Guantanamo Bay and the killing of civilians resulting from the increasing use of drones be undermining our own narrative? How credible, in the light of what is happening in Cuba and Afghanistan, is the claim that Western countries are democracies which value individual freedoms and human rights? Again, because any individual interprets incoming information according to a personal narrative that is rooted in one’s network of relationships at any given time, targeting extremists with the “right” message is, to put it bluntly, a waste of time. As political campaigners know, there is no point in trying to tell people who are very interested in politics who to vote for: these individuals have already decided. The same applies to extremists: they have already decided, too. That is why messages, if at all used, should target not the extremists, but who is around them: the extremists’ non-radical network of relationships.

In conclusion it is not possible to predict terrorism: there is no fixed formula that can tell when and where terrorism will arise. There are also no messages, however perfectly crafted, that can, alone, neutralise violent extremism. However, in each single local context, through community-based approaches and long-term engagement, it is possible to gain an insight into the local narratives and the networks such narratives arise from: What is the identity of the local community? How do its members see themselves? Who are the “relevant others” of that community? The establishment over time of radical identities through ideas and discourses can be detected. By being part of a community it is also possible to engage with the non-radical networks that are around an extremist core. This and the attention to the consistency between our narrative (words) and our policies (deeds) are the most effective tools against extremism.

Conclusions

- We can’t “predict” terrorism
- We can detect the establishment of radical identities
- Most powerful tools against extremism:
  - Community-based approaches & long-term engagement
  - Consistency between narrative (words) and policy (deeds)
Major Greg Seese (Psy.D)
J5 Director of Plans
Joint Information Support Task Force - Special Operations
gregory.seese@gmail.com

Gregory Seese is a US Army Psychological Operations Officer (PSYOP) currently serving as the J5 Director of Plans at the Joint Information Support Task Force–Special Operations (JISTF-SO), United States Special Operations Command Central (USSOCCENT). Prior to his present assignment, he spent several years at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. During his tenure there, he served as the PSYOP Advanced Individual Training (AIT) Company Commander, Course Manager of the PSYOP Officer Qualification Course, and as the Chief of the PSYOP Training Branch. Major Seese served in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Operation Enduring Freedom with the 3rd and 19th Special Forces Groups. His research interests include attitude and behavior change, motivation, deception, behavioral prediction/modeling, and bio & neurofeedback/qEEG. Major Seese is a licensed psychologist and has a Bachelor of Arts, Master of Science, and Doctorate in Psychology. He also earned a graduate certificate in Stability, Security, and Development in Complex Operations (SSDCO) from the Naval Post Graduate School.

This presentation focuses on current trends and methodologies in developing a comprehensive qualitative/quantitative assessment and evaluation plan for a behavior focused counterterrorism Psychological Operations (PSYOP) program. The mission of PSYOP is to influence behavior. Behavioral change is at the root of the PSYOP mission. Although concerned with the mental processes, it is the observable modification of behavior that determines mission success. Therefore, any counterterrorism influence effort must have clearly defined and measurable behavior focused goals and objectives.

The comprehensive PSYOP assessment and evaluation framework presented here consists of measurable program goals, supporting objectives, and series level message objectives that when properly nested provide detailed measures of effectiveness (MOE). Specific methodology includes: 1) Developing series level objectives (knowledge, beliefs, intermediate behaviors) to facilitate the evaluation of message effectiveness, 2) developing measurable/observable objectives to evaluate supporting program effectiveness, and 3) developing program goals to determine the impact the behavior change has (if any) against the desired end-states. In addition, the methodology will be presented within a pragmatic framework that starts with the identified behavioral problem and works through the development of quantifiable goals, and both intervention and prevention based objectives to achieve them.

In conclusion, evaluating the effectiveness of a PSYOP program can be a daunting task, but if measurable goals and objectives are developed, MOE questions are relatively straightforward to write. Properly crafted MOE’s are much easier to integrate into a supported unit’s intelligence collection plan, and lend credence to the credibility of influence programs. The pragmatic framework presented here demonstrates that it is possible to not only measure changes in behavior and the associated knowledge and beliefs, but also whether the program is having any impact on the problem itself.

- Measurable goals and objectives are critical in developing measures of effectiveness.
- Failure to develop specific, measurable, and observable SPOs will render the PSYOP plan ineffective and unmanageable.
- Series level metrics best indicator of change.
  - Behavior objectives
  - Knowledge objectives
  - Belief objectives
Dr. Agatha Glowacki
Senior Analyst
US National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC)
agathmg@nctc.gov

For the past decade, Agatha has worked for various US government agencies on issues pertaining to terrorist radicalization, including extremist propaganda and programs to counter violent extremism (CVE). Most recently, she worked for the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC) at the US State Department on their “ThinkAgain TurnAway” initiative on countering violent extremist propaganda online. Since then, she has transitioned to focusing on developing USG policies for CVE and CT messaging at the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC).

She received her Ph.D. from George Mason University's School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, focusing on narrative processes in conflict dynamics and narrative approaches to conflict resolution. Her dissertation, “From Narratives of Violence to Narratives of Peace: The Renunciation of Violence as a Discursive Phenomenon,” explored the narrative processes of violent extremist disengagement. Agatha earned her Master's degree in European Studies from Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, where she was also a US Fulbright Scholar, and studied the power of religious narratives in mobilizing nonviolent social movements, focusing on the case of the Catholic Church and the Solidarity Movement. She received her BA in Government from Harvard.

Sarah Hengemuhle
Senior Analyst
US National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC)
sarahdh2@nctc.gov

Sarah Hengemuhle has worked as an analyst for federal and commercial entities since 2004 covering a wide range of intelligence, communication and security topics. She is currently an analyst at the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC). Sarah graduated from Georgetown University in 2010 with a Master of Arts degree in Security Studies and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Government with a Public Policy emphasis from Patrick Henry College. Her graduate program included coursework on international security and mass media, intelligence policy and ethics, analytic and research methodologies, and economic drivers of terrorism. Her thesis project focused on the extent to which online factors provide impetus to terrorist recruitment.
Counterterrorism (CT) Communications: A Comprehensive Model – Dr. Agatha Glowacki and Sarah Hengemuhle

CT Communications are a specialized form of strategic communication uniquely different from other forms of messaging, and in some ways, particularly difficult. The mission includes both a CT component, which is to damage a violent extremist group’s capability by encouraging defections and disrupting the group, as well as a Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) component, which is to influence the general population by discouraging mobilization and preventing radicalization. The goals of CT Communications vary according to the audience being targeted—ranging from uncommitted, to radicalized, to mobilized audiences—and require different messaging strategies and approaches.

Direct messaging techniques use “counter narratives” to directly undermine and refute extremist messages, denigrate messengers, or disturb those within violent extremists’ ranks. Such techniques include refutation, denigration, condemnation, and agitation. These can be effective when targeting mobilized audiences by creating confusion, distraction, or paranoia among extremists, as well as preventing the further spread of extremist narratives by embroiling extremist communicators in defensive argumentation. They can also prevent the ceding of ground to extremists by offering a competing response and by reducing the incentive to spread extremist ideas by making them appear less defensible or appealing. There are risks to such messages, however, which include the possibility of inadvertently bringing attention to extremist narratives, and forcing CT Communicators to engage on the latter’s terms. Actually changing the minds of mobilized audiences through counter messaging is difficult, however. Adherents to extremist narratives who have acted upon them tend to be strongly resistant to counter evidence or direct argumentation, according to narrative theory. Direct confrontation often creates more resistance to change in individuals with deep-rooted beliefs, which risks further entrenching extremist beliefs. This is especially the case for mobilized audiences consisting of hard-line extremists who have acted upon their beliefs, thus solidifying and further imbedding these attitudes. In contrast, radicalized audiences—those who agree with the violent extremist narrative but have not yet engaged in supporting activities—may be shakier in their beliefs and possibly more open to counter argumentation. In such cases, direct messaging techniques can be employed to trigger enough uncertainty to deter them from mobilizing to violence.
Often, however, indirect messaging techniques may be more effective in changing the minds of radicalized audiences. Indirect techniques use “alternative narratives,” designed to distract from or supplant the adversary’s narrative—without directly referencing it—and to galvanize non-participatory audiences against it. These narratives work by indirectly destabilizing the credibility and appeal of extremist arguments, rather than directly challenging them through argumentation. Extremist narratives are oversimplified and reductionist, which serves as both a strength and a weakness. While extremist narratives are simple enough to be easily understood and spread, their simplicity makes them brittle and vulnerable to destabilization in the face of additional details, complexities, and alternate explanations that can inspire curiosity and uncertainty among the adherents. By introducing complexity into extremist narratives, these techniques gradually deflate their appeal by fracturing the underlying belief system, triggering doubt among radicalized audiences. However, doubt and curiosity can only grow in the adherent when they aren’t feeling threatened, according to narrative theory, implying that alternative narratives which aren’t confrontational, but rather seek to add new information, could be most effective.

Indirect messages include the promotion of positive narratives that emphasize solidarity, common causes, and shared values; substitution through providing alternative narratives that offer competing theological or ideological worldviews and solutions; and acknowledgement through narratives that recognize the suffering and extend sympathy to counter the adversary’s attempts at demonization. Messages that focus on acknowledgement are likely to elicit empathy—which communications, behavioral science and narrative studies indicate makes individuals more receptive to new information—while messages focused on promotion are likely to elicit positive emotions—such as hope—that can inspire uncommitted audiences, especially youth, to act against extremist narratives. Indirect messages are likely to be most effective among uncommitted audiences, those who are either unsympathetic or neutral towards the violent extremist narrative. Such messages aim to discourage radicalization and, in some cases, inspire some to engage in CVE themselves, leading to the formation of communities of interest and movements for positive change.
Government-directed efforts to employ indirect messaging are difficult, however. Such messaging requires a deep understanding of the culture, as well as credibility with audiences who may be deeply suspicious of the government. As a result, it may require partnering with local messengers and engaging in capacity building to train credible communicators. Such techniques also tend to require continuous, intensive efforts to build relationships, trust, and the necessary nuance to succeed. They are long-term strategies that seek to cause change through a gradual insertion of doubt, and as such, are less useful for crisis communication immediately following an event. There are significant limitations to CT Communications driven by government actors, some of which are impossible to avoid. Often one of the biggest challenges facing government CT Communicators is the demand for quick and measurable results, when in fact audiences’ beliefs almost certainly will not change immediately. Quite the contrary, CT communications are most effective if planned with the aim of sowing seeds of doubt over the long run. Sometimes, success can be as simple as just getting into the conversation. Another significant challenge is the need to quickly counter negative stories and misinformation that propagate across media markets and geographic boundaries. A consequence of a faster, more diffuse global media environment is that governments must be relentless and responsive. CT Communications are just a tiny part of the information the audience is receiving, so they need to be persistent. Furthermore, governments are often too unwieldy to adequately exploit the small windows of opportunity post events that would enable the greatest impact. Having scenarios prepared can enable pre-emptive messaging to occur before an event and responsive messaging to occur after an attack or inflammatory incident. A common difficulty is the complexity of coordinating and de-conflicting communications across government organizations, which may have contradictory goals or be targeting different audiences. CT Communications are most effective when integrated with complementary policy actions that reinforce and extend the messaging themes, but often matching words to actions can be unviable. At times, the best course of action may even be “strategic silence” when a communication response could exacerbate matters.
Stephen Harley is an experienced strategic communications management professional. He is a former soldier (British Army infantry, media and psychological operations officer including two operational tours of Iraq) and, in a brief sojourn from soldiering, taught English & Drama to the academically challenged children of financially gifted parents. For the last 10 years he has worked continuously on counter insurgency/counter terrorism strategic communications campaigns. A worrying artistic streak runs through his work (and occasionally even in synch with it) and, like Harry in Hemingway’s ‘The Snows of Kilimanjaro’, he worries that he has spent too much timing doing it and has forgotten to write about it.

After his second operational tour of Iraq, Harley joined a leading British communications company, Bell Pottinger, exploiting his recent experience of operational media and psychological operations. He led IO/Psyps projects in Baghdad, Iraq (2006-2007) and across the pan-Arab region (2008) on behalf the US government: in Afghanistan (2009) he embedded with a local media group in a capacity building role; led a UN project to provide support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), based in Nairobi and Mogadishu; worked as a consultant with an East African security provider, Halliday Finch, countering piracy off the Somali coast, and as an communications advisor to the British Army Training Unit in Kenya; and most recently was a NATO civilian in Afghanistan, firstly embedded with the British Task Force in Helmand province and latterly in Kabul. He is currently the Communications Advisor to the President of Somalia under the auspices of the UK FCO.
CASE STUDY: The Challenge of Operationalising Counter Terrorism Communication in Somalia – Mr. Stephen Harley

A Madman is Not Short of Wisdom – Somali proverb

Much effort has gone into the discussion of and possible solutions to the challenges of Target Audience Analysis (TAA), the battle of Narrative & Counter Narrative and Measurement of Effectiveness: areas that focus on research and academic studies, planning and methodology. However, it is the proposition of this case study that the real challenge in Strategic Communications in Counter Terrorism is the challenge of operationalising the intent and that our continued neglect of this area consistently thwarts our efforts. Using the Somali operating environment as an example, the case study provides a brief contextualisation, essential in a dynamic and often deceptive space like Somalia, then examines some of the recent approaches that have been adopted and why and concludes with some Lessons Learned about Strategic Communications in Counter Terrorism. The driver behind the approach taken in Somalia has been the need to select achievable goals within a complex, challenging and constantly shifting environment: not what we WANT to achieve, but what we CAN achieve (and which amongst those ‘can’s’ most closely match our own, wider objectives). That said, this is not a swipe at either academia or Ops/Plans by the ‘doers’ and one result of this case study is to create a bridge between theoreticians and practitioners.¹

The Somali Operating Environment

Somalia is an extreme operating environment. In the 24 years since the fall of President Said Barre, Somalia has suffered from long term lawlessness, meaning much of its population knows nothing of basic concepts such as government, the rule of law and democracy. The only occasionally functional elements in Somalia have been business, religion, and armed groups. Nationalist, clan and religious narratives drive behaviour at every level from international engagement at the governmental level to day-to-day individual

¹ POSTSCRIPT: As a result of this Case Study, two academics who attended the NATO SC in CT workshop then travelled to Mogadishu and participated in a Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) Counter al-Shabaab Communications workshop, at the invitation of the FGS.
interactions. Consumption of media, often using the latest technology, is voracious (but permeated by rumour and cynicism). While the traditional business acumen and work ethic of the Somalis has often made them popular and useful guests abroad, other elements of the Somali Diaspora have remained distant from their host nations and vulnerable to targeting by extremist elements. And, as if Somalia’s propensity to engage in self destructive activity was not enough, its vulnerability has left it open to ruthless exploitation by neighbours and others.

At the time of writing (May 2014), Somalia is 12 months into the New Deal for Fragile States, the first country in the world to adopt the programme: the AU mission, AMISOM and, increasingly, the Somali National Army, are pushing further into the hinterland in pursuit of al-Shabaab; the government is committed to a path that leads through Constitutional ratification to the national elections in 2016; in Mogadishu business is booming, flights are packed on the way into Somalia and empty on the way out, the seaport is bustling; and everywhere there is a cautious feeling of optimism. However, at the same time, there is cause for concern: security remains precarious with ‘recovered areas’ often being held only tentatively and in isolation (many recovered towns are essentially under siege and survive only with air-delivered sustenance); the cities are ‘booming’ in another way, as they are still subject to periodic high profile attacks; the government is viewed with a combination of distrust and disinterest; the security crackdown in Kenya riles Somalis everywhere; the FGS has yet to convince the international community to honour its pledges of $3 billion made at the Brussels conference in 2013; the country is fracturing into sub-states and some of those fractures, such as that of Somaliland, are nigh on irreparable; and, underlying everyone’s specific-to-the-time concerns, there is a feeling that the continuing chaos suits some elements and that, if the threat from al-Shabaab diminishes, an older, deeper menace to the state of Somalia will reappear – self-consuming clan-centric corruption, nepotism and violence.

That said, al-Shabaab are undoubtedly losing the physical element of the campaign in Somalia. As a result, undermining support for al-Shabaab should be more achievable than ever. But there are dynamics that constrain what can be achieved: al-Shabaab still has sympathy amongst elements of the population, including the Diaspora. As al-Shabaab’s campaign has become more regional and less directly focussed on Somalia, there is less reason to despise the group – if al-Shabaab isn’t bringing its reign of terror to your doorstep then al-Shabaab isn’t so much of a problem. More worryingly, factional elements, even in the apparatus of government, may well be using the continued presence of al-Shabaab for their own gain, potentially even to the extent of cooperating with al-Shabaab. Finally, and of most relevance to the strategic communications element of the campaign, al-Shabaab still maintains its presence and a perceived dominance of the information space (although this dominance is not supported by analysis).
Operationalising the Intent: Countering al-Shabaab

This paints a depressing picture, a seemingly insoluble conundrum. But that does not mean that nothing can be achieved in Somalia. It simply means very focussed activities: if the activity can be measured, if the activity can have an effect and if that activity is in line with strategic objectives then it is a worthwhile investment of time and resource. So what can be measured and what might be effective in countering al-Shabaab, then? The ‘check and balance’ of improving government and security forces performance provides the longer term, overarching answer to the myriad faux-government/Islamo-nationalist credibility claims of al-Shabaab. Targeting for kinetic operations continues and successes are exploited. In terms of specifically countering al-Shabaab, a number of campaigns have been identified for exploitation, two examples of which are an ‘Empowering Religious Authorities’ scheme and a re-examination of defectors programmes. These programmes are the work of the FGS, implemented with external assistance where required (often minimal), and are achievable and measureable. These campaigns are examined in some detail in the case study.

This experience has resulted in a number of lessons, notably the creation of a mutually beneficial bridge between the academic community and ‘the doers’ as well as a point for discussion, the need to re-assess how we approach SC in CT campaigns, taking into account elements such as local interface and creativity of approach (and bringing us back to the epigraph that starts the case study). These are both discussed at greater length in the case study.
Christopher Paul is a Senior Social Scientist working out of the RAND Corporation's Pittsburgh (USA) office. Prior to joining RAND full-time in July of 2002, he worked at RAND as adjunct staff for six years. Chris received his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) in 2001; he spent academic year 2001-02 on the UCLA statistics faculty. Chris has developed methodological competencies in comparative historical and case study approaches, quantitative analysis, and evaluation research. Current research interests include security cooperation, strategic communication, information operations, counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and operations in cyberspace. Chris has spoken, presented, taught, testified, or lectured before the House Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, for NATO audiences, to defense audiences in Singapore and in the UK, at the National Defense University, at the Naval Postgraduate School, at the Army War College, at the Naval War College, at the School of Advanced Military Studies – Army Command and General Staff College, at the USA/USMC COIN Center, at the Air Force Special Operations School, at the AETC Air Command and Staff College, and at the State Department’s Foreign Service Institute, among others.

Considerations for Planning and Conducting Assessment or Evaluation of Efforts to Inform, Influence, and Persuade – Dr. Christopher Paul

This presentation describes and applies some core findings from a forthcoming RAND study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). The study lays a foundation for the future evaluation and assessment of DoD efforts to inform, influence, and persuade.

RAND researchers conducted over 100 interviews with subject-matter experts in commercial marketing, public communication (including social marketing), academic evaluation research, and the defense and government sectors to identify and distil effective assessment practices. While all sectors provided interesting insights, the most fruitful came from public communication. Best practice in public communication adhered closely to the principles of academic evaluation research. Specifically, public communication activities were often analogous to defense efforts in that they sought to create durable behavioral change (rather than drive short-term purchasing decisions) among populations with varying levels of access and interest in changing their behaviors—and they did so for reasons other than profit motive. The study’s findings are extensive and broad in scope, covering reasons to conduct assessment, types of assessment, theories of influence, approaches to assessment design, techniques for specifying objectives and measures, evaluation data collection and analysis, and the presentation of results. Of particular relevance for this workshop are two of the principles common to strong assessment in all sectors considered: (1) the requirement that goals and objectives be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) and (2) the importance of a clear theory of change.

The theory of change for an activity, line of effort, or operation is the underlying logic for how planners think elements of the effort will lead to desired results. Simply put, a theory of change is a statement of how you believe the things you are planning on doing are going to lead to the objectives you seek. A theory of change can include logic, assumptions, beliefs, or doctrinal principles. The main benefit of articulating a theory of change in the assessment context is that it allows assumptions to be turned into hypotheses. These hypotheses can then be tested explicitly as part of the assessment process, with any failed hypotheses replaced in subsequent efforts until a validated, logical chain connects activities with objectives and objectives are met. Assessment is valuable when it confirms that an effort’s activities are producing the intended results. Assessment is even more valuable when desired results are not being achieved but it helps identify (and repair) the problem. Unfortunately, these two requirements (SMART objectives and a clear theory of change) are often unmet in strategic communication for counterterrorism. When the connection between influence efforts and desired reductions in extremist violence are left as unstated assumptions, those connections cannot be measured.
A not-uncommon implicit theory of change in this area is what I call the “funnel” model. This model divides the potential audience into four (or more) nested segments. The largest is the general population, which is neither radicalized nor mobilized. Below this is the segment of that larger population that is also neither radicalized nor mobilized but is vulnerable to radicalization. Below this is the segment of the vulnerable population that has actually been radicalized, though still not mobilized. The last segment is the very small proportion of any population that is both radicalized and mobilized to actively support or commit acts of terrorism (the output of the funnel). Under this implicit theory, the goal of strategic communication for counterterrorism is to reduce the number of individuals who radicalize at each point “down” the funnel, thus reducing the total number of terrorist supporters and attacks at the bottom of the funnel. This model faces a number of challenges. First, there is the “funnel assumption” that segments of a larger population are fairly homogenous and have a roughly equal risk of radicalization. Under this assumption, anything that reduces the size of a vulnerable segment would subsequently reduce the size of the segment below. However, there is no good reason to accept this assumption. An effort could reduce a given segment, but individuals within that segment could have some critical difference that makes them both more likely to radicalize and less likely to be deterred by the influence effort.

A related challenge concerns the relative proportions of the population in each segment. The widest part of the funnel consists of the general population and a vulnerable population, with proportionately few radicalized and very, very few radicalized and mobilized individuals. This “rare event” requires a different mind-set and different analytical approaches. It may also require different influence approaches if there is indeed a correlation between general levels of radicalization in a population and levels of mobilization or terrorist activity. Testing this theory of change or conducting assessment under its assumptions is similarly problematic. The desired outcome of any influence effort under this model is counterfactual: preventing those who might have radicalized and mobilized from doing so. Radicalization and mobilization are rare events, however, so the vast majority of a population does not radicalize and mobilize, and there is no way to identify the much smaller segment that (counterfactually) might have done so.

Nonetheless, there are several possibilities for assessment. One would be to articulate a narrower theory of change, one focused on a smaller segment or on demobilization or deradicalization. It is not counterfactual to measure those who used to be mobilized or radicalized and are no longer, and the connection between radicalization/mobilization and actual acts of terrorism is a safer assumption. Another would be to attempt to validate the implicit assumptions. This might involve measuring impacts on attitudes at higher levels of the funnel and outcomes at the bottom of the funnel (terrorist recruitment, funding, and acts), showing correlations over time. Finally, the uncertainty inherent in the
funnel model begs for more and better formative research, such as improved target audience analysis and a thorough exploration of the paths to (and away from) radicalization and mobilization.
Mr. Thomas Elkjer Nissen
Lecturer and researcher
Royal Danish Defence College
IMO-07@fak.dk

Thomas Elkjer Nissen, M.Sc., has worked at the Royal Danish Defence College (RDDC) since 2001 as a(n) Subject Matter Expert / Analyst. He is responsible to research, teaching and advising on: Strategic Communication (StratCom), Public and Defence Diplomacy, Cyber Warfare, Information Operations (Info Ops) and Psychological Operations (PsyOps). He has directed and developed courses and seminars in these subject areas, and is a high level advisor on them both nationally and within NATO. Thomas has also published a series of journal articles, book chapters and research papers on his field of expertise too, including recent work on “Strategy and Strategic Communication,” “Narrative Led Operations” and “The Weaponization of Social Media”.

Thomas regularly lectures at the NATO School in Oberammergau, Cranfield University, the University of Copenhagen, and University of Southern Denmark; as well as at various military academies and colleges, and at international conferences in Europe and the US. He is a standing member of several NATO Working Groups within the field, and a member of the UK based “Influence Advisory Panel”. Thomas is also used by the media as an expert on strategic communication and related cyber issues in crisis and conflict situations, interviewing frequently for television, radio, and print- and internet- based news outlets. Prior to joining the Defence College in Denmark, he served in the Danish Army from 1992 to 2001 in Light Recce units, operations and intelligence staff functions, and as an instructor at the Army School of Intelligence, and within tactical PSYOPS.
The two “New Blacks”; Social Media and Narratives and their relations to MoE – Mr. Thomas Elkjer Nissen

Terror-organisations today, to a higher and higher degree, use the internet and most notably social media, for creating the effects they desire through a series of on-line activities. These include information collection (intelligence) target selection, propaganda, recruitment and fundraising, in support of their physical activities. In addition, this dissemination of interlinked stories (words and images) supports their narrative too. This narrative is counter to most western liberal democracies’ narratives on terrorism in particular, and overarching “institutional” narratives in general.

“Institutional narrative” can be understood as a nation’s or organisation’s (like NATO) basic story about itself – defined by NATO as “(t)he translation of an organization’s mandate and vision into a fundamental, persistent story of who the organization is, what its guiding principles are, and what it aspires to achieve” (italics added) (MC 422/4). A narrative that both should be supported by, and inform, individual “theatre or mission narratives” for operations (like Afghanistan) or general issues (like terrorism). These strategic narratives can be defined as “…a means for political actors to construct a shared meaning of international politics, and to shape the perceptions, beliefs, and behaviour of domestic and international actors” (italics added) (Miskimmon, O’Loughlin and Roselle, 2012). Western liberal democracies thereby create and project narratives to tell the story about themselves to themselves and others, functioning as the framework (informed by values and norms) for understanding and making sense of a nation’s or organisation’s foreign- and security-policy (including the how and why for specific issues within these). This includes their views on, and response to terrorism.

Terror-organisation’s narratives on the other hand, draw on the very same Western democracy’s history, contemporary policies, behaviours and prescribed future aspirations as evidence of their narrative and its inherent claim – “the West is at war with Islam” – by singling out values and normative principles proclaimed by Western democracies, and their behaviours in support of it, concerning specific topics and issues. They often try to link the two, to support the terror-organisation’s claims, and in other instances point out where the two do not match – in order to show the West’s hypocrisy and double standards. This includes continuously drawing on existing – and well-known - conflicts between Israel and its Arab neighbours, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Danish Cartoon controversy and similar cases as evidence. Thereby exploiting existing “truths” deeply rooted with the strategic audiences. There exists therefore, a competition between narratives, for strategic audience support for either Western liberal democracies or terror-organisations. This is a competition that is inherently asymmetric, as most Western liberal democracy’s narratives are incoherent and
contextualised depending on the issue at hand, compared to the terror-organisation’s narrative that is relatively straight forward, and where most, if not all of the West’s behaviour can be used as evidence to support terror-organisation’s basic claim(s).

In respect to strategic audiences, the West has to reassure its constituencies, and minimise the threat perception, while at the same time balancing between spending on counter-terrorism and protecting civil rights – and explain this in the narrative. It also has to message vulnerable groups to prevent them from becoming radicalised by the terror-organisation’s narrative and activities in social media, while at the same time try to undermine and address the members and supporters of terror-organisations. The terror-organisations on the other hand, also have to maintain support from their supporters, while attracting new members (recruitment) and mobilising new supporters – preferably adopting behaviours that support their narrative and objectives, including financial support or through becoming “lone wolves” in Western countries. Alternatively, travelling to conflict areas and becoming “foreign fighters” which, in turn, can be used to further substantiate their narrative. Internal support however, is only one aspect – the other being activities that are aimed at general constituencies in Western countries to constantly perpetuate the perception of imminent terrorist attacks, and enhancing and multiplying the effects of their actual physical attacks.

This narrative competition to affect a strategic audience’s perception and behaviour, through narratives which are used as organising frameworks, is also a competition that is played out in particular in social network media. As pointed out in the beginning of this summary, terror-organisations use social media for everything from intelligence collection, targeting and influence, command and control, operational direction, to recruitment and education. Western liberal democracies also use social media for creating “military” effects in the information environment in support of policy objectives tied to counter-terrorism activities. This is not a trivial task. Achieving and maintaining situational awareness, collecting intelligence, targeting and conducting operations in and through social media is effective but also very challenging, not least from a policy perspective. Furthermore these activities need to be supportive of the narrative (institutional and mission-specific), and their effects need to be measured. The latter is especially challenging due to the many confounding variables constantly presenting themselves in social media, which only adds to the complexity.

It is therefore an enormous task for western liberal democracies to create and project a coherent counter-radicalisation or counter-terrorism narrative – clear statements of what success looks like are usually absent, social media dynamics are constantly changing, and measuring effectiveness is at best exceptionally challenging. It is within this context that this presentation aims to highlight some of the key features of “narrative competition” between Western liberal democracies and terror-organisations,
and comment on how social media is used by both for projecting, and assessing the impact of, narratives with strategic audiences.
Ms. Susan Sim
Adjunct Lecturer and Vice-President for Asia
Home Team Academy (Singapore) and The Soufan Group, respectively
Susan.Sim@soufangroup.com

Susan Sim has extensive experience in law enforcement, intelligence analysis, journalism, and diplomacy. She started her career as an Inspector in the Singapore Police Force. Thereafter she was a senior intelligence analyst in charge of counter-terrorism and counter-espionage at the Internal Security Department; Indonesia Bureau Chief for the Singapore Straits Times; Deputy Chief of Mission at the Singapore Embassy in Washington DC; and Senior Fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at the Nanyang Technological University. In 2009, she founded Strategic Nexus Consultancy, a boutique research firm specializing in home front security and counterterrorism issues. In December 2010, she also took up a position as Vice President for Asia of The Soufan Group, an international strategic consultancy with offices in New York, Doha, London and Singapore. Ms. Sim is an Adjunct Lecturer at the Home Team Academy of Singapore and Consulting Editor to the Home Team Journal.

Ms. Sim speaks regularly at the NATO Centre of Excellence Defence against Terrorism in Ankara, Turkey, and is the Southeast Asia Specialist for the Qatar International Academy for Security Studies (QIASS) Global Study on Countering Violent Extremism. She is currently also an Associate Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore. Her public service activities include serving on the Board of Editors of Police Practice and Research, and chairing the Research Committee of the National Crime Prevention Council of Singapore. Her book, “Making Singapore Safe: Thirty Years of the National Crime Prevention Council”, was launched by Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean in November 2011. She has also contributed to the Pearls In Policing 2012 report, Homeland Security And Terrorism (edited By James Forest, Russell Howard And Joanne Moore, McGraw-Hill, 2013); and has written on suicide bombing and terrorist rehabilitation for the NATO Science For Peace And Security Series. Ms. Sim is a graduate of Oxford University, United Kingdom.
Since late 2001, when Southeast Asia discovered it had a terrorist group trained by al-Qaeda and prepared to carry out its agenda of global jihad, and especially after it carried out suicide bombings in Bali in October 2002, more than 1000 members of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and its variants have been killed or arrested and detained in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. Almost immediately, each government also began developing terrorist rehabilitation programmes to refute the narrative of violence that bound the detainees to JI. Questions about the effectiveness of these programmes continue to go unanswered, the only measure available being the recidivism rate. The well-kept secret, however, is that the rehabilitation programmes have also produced terrorist dropouts who are speaking out publicly against al-Qaeda and its indiscriminate killings, and helping law enforcement develop arguments and tactics to encourage other terrorists to cooperate. The assumption is that these dropouts are seen as more credible advocates against the use of violence and terror than any figure in authority among the targeted audience – impressionable youth and those on the fringe of violent extremism.

The Indonesian Police’s counterterrorism unit Detachment 88 has been at the forefront of attempting to use former JI leaders to convince others to renounce violence. They’ve encouraged them to write memoirs that reveal dissent within the group, as well as refutations of the theological arguments used to justify violence. Two of Detachment 88’s poster boys – Bali bomber Ali Imron, and Nasir Abas, JI’s leader in Borneo and the southern Philippines – have been featured in comic books designed to steer children away from extremism. Malaysia’s counterterrorism force, meanwhile, invites select former JI members to counsel detained terrorist suspects – but only after they have passed a polygraph test and are clearly no longer involved in militant activities. At “deradicalization seminars,” JI’s former secretary general, Zulkifli Marzuki, has been telling his former colleagues about the “big mistake” he made killing innocents. Singapore uses its terrorist dropouts more sparingly. Occasionally it will arrange for their participation in anonymous media interviews. These stories serve to enforce the national narrative that the country remains under threat of terrorism but is not at war with Islam. However, while defectors
may renounce terrorism, they have not necessarily abandoned their deep belief in a duty to defend their faith. Many defectors now reject violence directed at civilians, but not violence per se.

Indonesia’s Abas and Imron, for instance, candidly admit that they regret tactical errors committed by JI. But they still believe that they have a duty to kill any soldier involved in fighting Muslims. The difference is that now, having learned from their mistakes, they say they will be better prepared and attack only from a position of strength, and in compliance with theological doctrine that forbids the killing of women, children and outside a state of war. The Jemaah Islamiyah doctrine of jihad as battle is still intrinsic to Abas’s and Imron’s belief system, but they now place constraints on, say, suicide bombing. Ali Imron writes in his memoir: “Suicide bombing is [only] permissible in war and when there is no other option available.” Imron tells his visitors that Islam is a religion of peace. They should work to establish an Islamic state by following the way of the Prophet Mohammad. “[B]ut once we achieve an Islamic state, we can do war in the name of jihad.”

In countries that have suffered terrorist attacks, putting terrorist dropouts on a pedestal, even if their statements are carefully calibrated, can be offensive — especially to victims. Indonesian police believe it is a deal they nevertheless need to make to save lives. They need terrorist dropouts like Ali Imron to do “good counter-propaganda” to amplify the wrongdoings of Jemaah Islamiyah, former Detachment 88 chief Tito Karnavian says. “The police can’t debate religion,” says Mr. Karnavian, and extremists are not interested in listening to moderates. He therefore needs to co-opt radical ideologues who can re-orient extremist concepts — for example, the concept of “evil oppressors” that is central to how extremists perceive enemies. If Mr. Karnavian can get a former terrorist ideologue to show that the government and police are not evil oppressors, he says, “it’s a big problem for the extremist movement, as it’ll have to reformulate who the enemy is.” It is clear, however, that renunciation of violence does not necessarily follow the renunciation of terror — and renunciations of terror themselves can be insincere, as the re-arrests of several individuals in the three countries show. What’s more, even if a terrorist renounces violence at home, should governments allow their citizens to incite violence elsewhere? The answer is no, as re-arrests of two individuals in Singapore and Malaysia who tried to answer the clarion call of Syria suggest. The challenge of terrorist disengagement has never been more salient, especially with the Syrian conflict acting as catalyst and action imperative. At the forefront of those urging Southeast Asians to wage jihad in Syria are several Indonesian ideologues currently in Indonesian prisons for the second time for terrorism offences. Indeed they are even more influential in local extremist circles now with their jailhouse publications and “fatwas”. In contrast, Nasir Abas and Ali Imron have been largely silent on the subject of Syria, recognizing perhaps that they do not have a credible message to persuade others that the duty of jihad does not apply in this war zone.
James is an expert in cyber security issues, global risk, and strategic communication. He is an author, corporate attorney with expertise in advising boards on director legal responsibilities, and defense consultant who advises corporations on public issues and the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Special Operations Command on global initiatives and actions, communication strategy, and cyber security and the legal/policy aspects of cyber conflict. He has served as a consultant to the U.S. Department of Defense, including Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy), Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence), Special Operations - Low Intensity Conflict, U.S. Special Operations Command, and U.S. Strategic Command. He serves as a Senior Adviser to the J5 of U.S. Special Operations Command (US SOCOM).

James has international experience in handling political campaigns at the presidential level in handling campaigns for strategy and media. In the United States, he has handled or advised as to strategy and media in campaigns for the U.S. Presidency, Senate, Governor, Congress and state-wide offices. James was named one of America’s “Rising Stars” by Campaign & Elections Magazine and cited by Roll Call as one of the top political consultants in the United States, with experience nationally and internationally in Presidential campaigns. He holds a B.A. from Tulane University, a J.D. in Law from Tulane University, and a D.C.L.S. in Comparative Law from the University of Cambridge (Trinity College). A prolific author on security and strategic issues, cyber war/neurotechnology, relevant titles he has published include ‘The Pakistan Cauldron: Conspiracy, Assassination & Instability’ and ‘Persuasion & Power: The Art of Strategic Communication’, and a number of titles to be published including ‘Communication Strategy: How To Forge One That Wins’ (forthcoming from Joint Special Operations University). He also contributes to the arts as playwright, and novelist.
Forging Actionable and Winning Communication Strategies – Mr. James Farwell (J.D)

TAA is conducted to forge communication strategies that influence attitudes and opinions to shape behavior to achieve specific effects or desired end-states. TAA for CT differs drastically from TAA in democracies, where one is not fighting violent extremists or conducting TAA in what may be denied areas. It is the target audiences who can affect the outcomes – which vary from audience to audience. No formula governs this analysis – groups and contexts differ. Audience segmentation facilitates analysis of different audiences who can affect the outcome of a communication strategy. TAA breaks down an audience into its demographic elements and histories of individual provinces, towns, villages, valleys, politics, alliances, etc.; it examines the factors that drive culture and society. TAA provides insight into the strategic context of a communication campaign and how to forge one that wins by asking questions.²

Further, the narrative landscape needs to be analysed.³ This enables you to develop testing that compares and contrasts your own story, narratives, themes, messages against those of the enemy with each audience to ascertain how they respond. The answers to those questions will provide insight into the awareness and visibility of your actions and communication; understanding of TA interest, agendas, and beliefs; how believable, persuasive, and credible your themes and messages are in striking a responsive chord. Information Operations, however characterized, are about influencing target audiences. MOE is essential to understanding why what works, what does not, why, and how to correct what does not work. But while quantitative and qualitative data is helpful, such data should inform, not serve as a substitute for, judgment. Counter-narratives are a contest for influence. One needs to understand how one’s own message resonates; how that of the enemy resonates; and how what each side says about the other resonates in order to forge and execute an actionable, winning communication strategy. That applies at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels.

² What is the powerful idea or cause that drives it? What defines success? What story explains what you are doing it, why, and how it benefits affected audiences? What narratives explain that story? What themes and messages drive the narratives? What language is used to express the above? What strategies are you employing to drive the narrative? What channels and messengers are you using? How does all of that align with the culture and society you are dealing with?

³ Understand what the enemy is saying – and assess the enemy objectively. Who is the enemy and how do you define it? How does the enemy see itself? What is its objective? How does the enemy define winning? What is its communication strategy? What is the enemy story, narrative, theme and message? What language does the enemy employ to express the above? How credible, believable, and persuasive is the enemy message? Who comprises the enemy’s target audience?
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<td>Insurgency and Strategic Communications</td>
<td>Dr. Neville Bolt</td>
<td>Lecturer, Department of War Studies, King’s College London</td>
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<td>Communication and Counter Terrorism in the Digital Age: Overcoming Outdated Approaches to the Information Environment</td>
<td>Dr. Cristina Archetti</td>
<td>Associate Professor in Politics and Media, University of Salford</td>
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<td>Comprehensive PSQOP assessment and evaluation in counter-terrorism efforts</td>
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<td>1400-1440</td>
<td>Counterterrorism Communications: A Comprehensive Model</td>
<td>Dr. Agatha Głowacki, Ms. Sarah Hengemuhle</td>
<td>Senior Analyst(s), US National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC)</td>
<td>(40:30+10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1445-1525</td>
<td>Case Study: Somalia</td>
<td>Mr. Stephen Harley</td>
<td>Communications Advisor</td>
<td>(40:30+10)</td>
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<td>1530-1555</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>1600-1645</td>
<td>Measuring Effectiveness (2 of 2)</td>
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<td>1600-1645</td>
<td>Planning and Evaluation: Considerations, Inform, Influence, and Persuade</td>
<td>Dr. Christopher Paul (VTC)</td>
<td>Senior Social Scientist and Professor, Pardee RAND Graduate School</td>
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<tr>
<td>1645-1650</td>
<td>Day 1 closing, brief</td>
<td>Pete A</td>
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<tr>
<td>1650-1700</td>
<td>Rapporteur brief</td>
<td>Pete A</td>
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### Day 2 – Thu, 05 June 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timings</th>
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<th>Remarks</th>
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<td>0830</td>
<td>Arrive COEDAT</td>
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<td>0835-0850</td>
<td>Refreshments</td>
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<td>0855</td>
<td>Day 2, opening</td>
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<td>0900-1050</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
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<td>0900-0940</td>
<td>The Two 'New Blacks': Social Media and Narratives and their relations to MoE</td>
<td>Mr. Thomas Nissen</td>
<td>Lecturer and researcher, Royal Danish Defence College</td>
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<td>0945-1025</td>
<td>Leveraging Terrorist Dropouts to Counter Violent Extremism: Lessons from Southeast Asia</td>
<td>Ms. Susan Sim</td>
<td>Adjunct Lecturer and Vice-President for Asia, Home Team Academy (Singapore) and The Soufan Group</td>
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<td>1030-1055</td>
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<tr>
<td>1100-1145</td>
<td>Forging Strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>1100-1140</td>
<td>Forging Actionable and Winning Communication Strategies</td>
<td>Mr. James Farwell (J.D.)</td>
<td>Senior Research Scholar in Strategic Studies, Canada Centre for Global Security Studies, Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto</td>
<td>(40:30+10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1145-1220</td>
<td>Reportee</td>
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<td>1145-1230</td>
<td>5 min summary, each</td>
<td>All speakers</td>
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<td>Lunch, including transport</td>
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<td>Endgame</td>
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<td>1400-1415</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
<td>All</td>
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<td>1415-1430</td>
<td>Rapporteur conference</td>
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<td>Summary</td>
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<td>Closing</td>
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